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GRID (12): FIREPLACES

Jaydn Dewald

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GRID (12): FIREPLACES

Jaydn DeWald

... a world out of objects shared between us.

—Maya Catherine Popa

Glowing behind antique brass screens: Hea(r)t source. Made-to-order crackle. As though you must kneel here, shivering, warming your hands palm outward. To feed, to stoke; to douse, to smother. Inviting lucidity. So that a wing of smoke may rise, soar townward, then hover for a feathery vanish outside his balcony window. Classic centerpiece of a room. 19th-century television. With brick trimmer, chimney breast, andiron, crane. Our shadows performing (affordable & energy-efficient) on Plato's cave walls. Shall I spit-roast the chicken? Burn your letters one at a time? All at once the lawyers disrobe, lie supine on the *yakisugi* hearth seat, their leaf-veined cocks glinting variously above their navels. "Gather round, everybody." On spider-cracked concrete. Indoors & out. In the flickering of which he can still see you guiding the blade across your forearm. Ethanol, wood-burning, gas-powered, coal. To (re)unite the living space. Ignite stories/incantations—gold sparks ribboning into darkness. Doubled in lacquered earthenware, his ghost-white Reebok Pumps. A monument to romance? Let it burn. Color of fury, color of a vast mouth yawning above me. With rainwater catchments. Automatic on/off sensors. *Long-held gaze over long-held shoulder*. Look: In the deepest caverns of sleep, your eyes, too, will smolder & smolder ...

JAYDN DEWALD is the author of the essay collection *SHEETS OF SOUND* (Broken Sleep Books, 2020); a cross-genre book, *THE ROSEBUD VARIATIONS* (Broken Sleep Books, forthcoming Sept 2021); and five limited-edition chapbooks, most recently *A LOVE SUPREME: fragments & ephemera*, winner of the 2019 Quarterly West Chapbook Contest. He is Assistant Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia.